



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

May 19, 2023

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## **Hillcrest High School Students Take Top Honors in Sustainable Home Design Essay Contest Held by Riverside Public Utilities (RPU)**

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Three juniors at Hillcrest High School took top honors in an essay contest conducted by Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) that asked local youth for their ideas on sustainable home design.

Students were asked to write an 800-1,500-word essay that included a design idea that incorporated either water or energy conservation. The contest was open to individual students in grades 9-12 living in or attending public or private school in Riverside Public Utilities Service Area.

“The students’ essays show a real depth of knowledge and understanding of the issues facing our local utility and California overall,” said RPU Board Chair Gil Ocegüera. “We are fortunate to have such bright young people as part of our effort to build a more sustainable city, state and nation.”

Winners included:

- First place -- James To, whose essay “The Importance of Sustainable Home Design” discussed the use of eco-friendly building materials to reduce the carbon footprint and also prefab housing, which uses fewer materials, less labor and saves time and money, and often produces less building waste.
- Second place -- Jacob Lattig, whose essay “An Attainable Sustainable Home Design” focused on water conservation methods in new home builds, siting for optimal indoor lighting, and new developments in solar energy, such as replacing windows with clear glass solar panels.
- Third Place -- Giselle Flores, whose essay “Water Conservation: Motion-Sensored Faucets” focused on water conservation, particularly the use of motion-sensored faucets in bathrooms, which is especially useful with small children.

Essays were judged by employees of Riverside Public Utilities, including engineers from various engineering disciplines. Criteria included effectiveness in communicating ideas fully, demonstrating understanding of sustainable living, accuracy of research, incorporation of technical information to support ideas, creativity, originality in content selection, grammar, spelling, and mechanics.

“Sustainability and climate change are two of the biggest issues facing our industry,” RPU General Manager Todd Corbin said. “These students demonstrated a real understanding of those challenges, and they have bright futures ahead of them.”

Prizes included \$600 for first, \$400 for second and \$200 for third.

More information can be found [here](#).